



## ESL Podcast 80 – Asking For Directions

### GLOSSARY

**on top of that** – in addition; moreover; also

\* Busa has high blood pressure and diabetes, and on top of that, she just found out that she has a bad hip!

**to get in touch with (someone)** – to communicate with someone, especially if one hasn't spoken with that person in a while

\* I wanted to get in touch with you, but I couldn't find your phone number or email address.

**to invite (someone) over** – to ask someone to come to one's home

\* We'd like to invite you over for coffee and dessert next Friday evening.

**place** – home; house or apartment; where one lives

\* Quentin is really nervous about letting his girlfriend see his place, because it's so dirty and messy.

**to get lost** – to not know where one is or how to go where one wants to go

\* It's really easy to get lost in a big city, especially if you don't have a good map.

**turned around** – disoriented; not knowing where one is or which direction one should go; not knowing which way is north, south, east, or west

\* If you get turned around in the woods, remember that the sun always rises in the east and sets in the west.

**Excuse me, could you tell me how to get to (somewhere)** – a very polite phrase used to ask a stranger how to go somewhere

\* Excuse me, could you tell me how to get to the library?

**opposite direction** – the other way; right if one is going left, or backward if one is moving forward

\* Normally, I'd be happy to drop off those papers at the office for you, but unfortunately it's in the opposite direction from where I need to go today.

**you're kidding** – a phrase used when one is very surprised by what another person has just said and almost does not believe it because it seems so unlikely

\* You used to be in the army? You're kidding! You always talk about how important peace is, so I would never have guessed that you used to be a soldier.



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**to head** – to go in a particular direction; to go a particular way

\* As you head toward the river, you'll pass by a lot of great restaurants and coffee shops.

**other direction** – the opposite way; the opposite direction; west if one was going east, or north if one is going south

\* In this city, many young families live toward the south, and most retirees live in the other direction.

**block** – the distance along a street between two cross streets; the distance along a street from where one street crosses it to where the next street crosses it

\* They live on a noisy block that's almost in the center of downtown.

**intersection** – where two streets cross each other, often with a stoplight or at least stop signs

\* My mother always told me to look both ways for cars before walking across a busy intersection.

**to hang a left** – to turn left, especially when driving

\* When you get to the park, hang a left and then you'll be on Glisan Street.

**to go straight down** – to move forward; to move ahead without turning

\* Go straight down that road for about one mile until you see the sign for the park.

**to hit** – to approach a street or building; to find or encounter

\* If you stay on this road, you'll hit the museum.

**to make a left** – to turn left

\* Make a left immediately after passing the gas station.

**left hand side** – on the left; on one's left

\* As you drive north on Burnside Avenue, the pharmacy will be on your left hand side.

**to have got it** – to understand something correctly or completely

\* That's right! You've got it!



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### CULTURE NOTE

#### The Significance of Colors and Directions in Native American Culture

Many “Native American” (the descendants of the people who lived in North America before European settlers arrived) “tribes” (large groups of people who live together) associate or connect colors with “cardinal directions” (north, south, east and west). These colors are often “symbolic of” (representing) different “concepts” (ideas).

Although it is difficult to “generalize” (make statements that are true about all members of a group) about Native Americans, since each tribe is very different, many tribes have a “medicine wheel,” or a visual way to represent their “spirituality” (beliefs and faith). The medicine wheel “encompasses” (includes; covers) the four cardinal directions and the four “sacred” (holy; having religious and/or spiritual significance) colors, although the colors and meanings vary “significantly” (a lot) among tribes. Here is a description of one medicine wheel:

- Red represents the East. It also is used to show “triumph” (winning) and success.
- Blue represents the North. It is also used to show “defeat” (losing), “trouble” (problems or danger) and sadness.
- Black represents the West. It is also used to show death.
- White represents the South. It is also used to show “tranquility” (calmness), happiness, and peace.

Some Native American tribes use other colors for three additional directions. The following colors are used in the same medicine wheel described above:

- Yellow is used to represent anything up above.
- Brown is used to represent anything down below.
- Green is used to represent the center.



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### COMPLETE TRANSCRIPT

Welcome to English as a Second Language Podcast episode 80: Asking for Directions.

You're listening to English as a Second Language Podcast number 80. I'm your host, Dr. Jeff McQuillan, from the Center for Educational Development in beautiful Los Angeles, California.

This podcast is about listening or rather asking for directions. So, let's get started!

[start of dialogue]

I went to Vancouver for a meeting this week. I have always liked Vancouver, and on top of that, my cousin Dominick just moved there. I got in touch with him and he invited me over to see his new place.

On the way over, though, I got a little lost. I knew I was in the right area, but I was turned around. He lived in an apartment over an old bakery and I couldn't find it.

I stopped a man who was walking by to ask for directions.

Lucy: Excuse me, could you tell me how to get to the Cross Bakery building?

Man: The Cross Bakery building? Oh sure. You're actually walking in the opposite direction.

Lucy: Oh, you're kidding! I thought I was heading east.

Man: No, east is the other direction. To get to the Bakery, you need to turn around and go three blocks to Broadway. When you get to the intersection of Broadway and Elm, you hang a left. Go straight down that street for half a block and then you'll see the building on your left.

Lucy: Okay, let me see if I've got that. I need to go down Elm until I hit Broadway, then I make a left and the building is on my left- hand side. Is that right?

Man: Yeah, you've got it. Do you want me to show you the way?

Lucy: Thanks for the offer, but I think I've got it. Hopefully, I won't get lost again on my way there!



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[end of dialogue]

This podcast is about asking for directions, h. How to get somewhere when you are lost or don't know where to go. This story begins with Lucy going to Vancouver and she says she likes Vancouver but "on top of that" her cousin Dominick just moved there. The expression, "on top of that," means in addition to. It could be a good thing, it could be a bad thing. – In t Tthis case, it's a good thing. "I'm going to a Hawaii and on top of that I'm going to take a cruise around the islands," – something additional, something better. Lucy says that she "got in touch" with her cousin. "To get in touch with someone" means to contact them. We often say to people, "Stay in touch," meaning keep in contact with me. Call me every few weeks or few months, whatever it happens to be. But when Lucy says she "got in touch" that means she called or communicated, maybe emailed her cousin. He "e" invited her over" to see his new place. "To invite someone over," – one of those two-word verbs we've talked a lot about. "To invite over" means you're inviting someone to come to your location. If someone says, "I want to invite you over to dinner," they mean, "I want you to come to my house for dinner." But if someone says, "I want to invite you to dinner," usually that means you're going to go to a restaurant.

The new "place" that Lucy is visiting is just another word for the new house or the new apartment. People refer to where they live sometimes as their "place." "My place is located near Santa Monica, California." It can be anywhere you're living. Lucy said that she "got a little lost." "To get lost," here means that you couldn't find your way, – you didn't know where you were. The expression, "get lost," when you say that to someone as a command, – "You, get lost!" – wWe're saying we want you to leave. It's kind of something that you would say to someone you don't like and you want them to leave. – "Get lost!"

Lucy said that she was "turned around" when she was trying to find her cousin's apartment. "To be turned around" or to be "all turned around" – means that you're not sure which direction you are travelling in. "I went to downtown Los Angeles and there were many one-way streets, – streets where you can only move in one direction, – and I got all turned around;" – I didn't know where I was." Lucy says, "Excuse me, could you tell me how to get to the Cross Bakery building?" She begins in asking for directions, by saying, "Excuse me" which is a common way of getting someone's attention that you – particularly someone that you don't know. It's a polite way of getting their attention. The expression, "Could you tell me how to get to," means can you give me directions on how to arrive to this particular place. So, she asks for directions to a bakery and the man says, "Sure, I can tell you but you're walking in the opposite direction." He means here that



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she is going, for example, north, when she should be going towards the south, – the other direction, – opposite of what she is travelling. So, east would be west, west would be east.

Lucy says, “Oh, you’re kidding!” The expression “You’re kidding” (kidding) means here that she is surprised by the response that she gets. “To kid someone” (kid) – “to kid,” as a verb, – means to joke with them, – not to tell them the truth but in a sort of fun or joking manner. So, when Lucy says, “You’re kidding!” – sShe’s saying, “Wow, are you sure? I didn’t realize;” – that surprises me.” The other expression is “I’m kidding,” and when someone says, “I’m kidding,” or “Just kidding,” they mean they’re joking, they’re not telling the truth. Lucy says that she thought she was “heading” east. “To head” in a direction”, – east, west, north, south, – means that you are travelling or going, – walking, driving, etc., – in that direction. You can also “head” to a particular place. “I’m heading to the store” means I’m going to the store. The man tells Lucy that east is the “other direction,” meaning pretty much the same here as the opposite direction.

He gives her instructions by telling her that she needs to “turn around and go three blocks to Broadway.” When you tell someone to “turn around,” you mean to go in the opposite direction. He says that she needs to go three “blocks.” A “block” is – in a city – is the distance between two streets – is one “block.” She needs to go three “blocks” and when she gets to the “intersection” of Broadway and Elm, she should “hang a left.” The “intersection is the place where two streets cross and the expression “to hang a left” is informal. It means to “take a left” or “to go left.” Notice the expression is “hang a left” or “take a left.” You can also say, “mMake a left.” A – all those are the same. You can, of course, also “hang a right,” or “make a right” or “take a right.” The expression using the verb “turn,” however, doesn’t take the article “a” or (a). So, you “turn right” not “turn a right.” You “turn right,” you “turn left.” T– that means the same as to make a right, – to take a right or to hang a right. “Hang” is very informal, however.

The man then tells her to “go straight down the street.” “To go straight” means don’t go left, don’t go right – go in the direction you are walking.” And the building she is looking for will be “on your left,” meaning on the left-hand side. Lucy repeats the directions back. She says, “Okay, I need to go down Elm until I hit Broadway.” “To go down a street” just means to travel or to move down a street in your car or by walking. “To go down to Elm until she hits Broadway” – when we say, “You should go to this in this direction until you hit a street or a freeway or a road” we mean until you arrive there. “Go until you hit 5th Street then hang a right” means drive until you reach or arrive at 5th street and turn right.



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Lucy said then that she needs to “make a left.” A— again, we talked about that expression and the building will be on her “left-hand side.” “Left-hand” side” is the same as on your left.

At the end the man says, “Do you want me to show you the way?” “To show someone the way” means you’re going to take them or they are going to follow you. I’m going to show you the way, – the route or how you get there. The man may be interested in more than just helping Lucy here, we might guess. And Lucy says, “Thanks for the offer” – means thank you for offering or for volunteering to help me. Anything that you offer or say that you will do for another person, you could use this expression. – “Thanks for the offer of taking my car to the mechanic.” Notice we would offer --, in this expression, we use the preposition “of” and then we use the verb in the “-ing” form. “Thanks for the offer of going to the store for me.” But Lucy “turns down” the offer, and that’s the verb we use, to “turn down” an offer, – to say no. The opposite would be to “accept” an offer, – to say yes. Lucy says that “I’ve got it,” and what she means here is she understands. When someone says, “I’ve got it” – means, “Yes, I understand. I don’t need any more help.”

Now let’s listen to the dialogue this time at a native rate of speech.

[start of dialogue]

I went to Vancouver for a meeting this week. I have always liked Vancouver, and on top of that, my cousin Dominick just moved there. I got in touch with him and he invited me over to see his new place.

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Man: Yeah, you've got it. Do you want me to show you the way?

Lucy: Thanks for the offer, but I think I've got it. Hopefully, I won't get lost again on my way there!

[end of dialogue]

We hope you won't get lost in going to our website at [www.eslpod.com](http://www.eslpod.com). You can find our scripts there and other information about our podcast. From Los Angeles, California, I'm Jeff McQuillan. We'll see you next time on ESL Podcast.

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